

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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R 091419Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9191

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, NI

SUBJECT: POLICE ANNOUNCE 38 NOW IN DETENTION

REF: LAGOS A-27, MARCH 6, 1975

1. NIGERIA POLICE REVEALED MAY 6 THAT TOTAL NUMBER OF DETAINEES UNDER EMERGENCY REGULATIONS NOW STANDS AT "ONLY" 38-- FOUR ARMY OFFICERS AND 34 CIVILIANS. POLICE DID NOT LIST THEIR NAMES.

2. POLICE STATEMENT TOOK PAINS TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DETAINEES UNDER ARMED FORCES AND POLICE (SPECIAL POWERS) DECREE NO. 24 OF 1967 AND ORDINARY SUSPECTS HELD PENDING TRIAL. IT SAID THAT IN LAGOS AREA PRISONS ALONE 1123 PERSONS ARE ON REMAND AWAITING TRIAL, BUT THAT THESE SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH 38 IN DETENTION UNDER EMERGENCY DECREE.

3. MARCH 3 ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION COMMISSIONER CLARK (REFAIRGRAM) CONCERNING DETAINEES GAVE IMPRESSION THAT TOTAL NUMBER WAS FIVE. EDITORIAL IN MAY 9 DAILY TIMES LAMBASTS LACK OF COORDINATION BETWEEN CLARK AND POLICE, SUGGESTS NOBODY KNOWS HOW MANY DETAINEES THERE REALLY

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ARE, AND AGAIN ATTACKS DETENTION AS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. COMMENT: FMG STILL TRYING SUPPLANT RUMOR ABOUT NUMBER OF DETAINEES WITH FACT, EVIDENTLY IN HOPE OF DEFUSING GROWING PRESS CLAMOR FOR END OF EMERGENCY POWERS. HOWEVER, EMBARRASSING DISCREPANCY BETWEEN CLARK AND POLICE AUGURS POORLY FOR FMG ATTEMPT TO CLEAR AIR, AND IMMEDIATE REACTION OF DAILY TIMES SUGGESTS PRESS DISCONTENT OVER DETENTION MORE LIKELY TO BE STIMULATED THAN MUTED BY LATEST REVELATIONS.
CROSBY

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